

CONFIDENTIAL.]

REPORT

[No. 15 of 1878.

ON

NATIVE PAPERS

FOR THE

Week ending the 13th April 1878.

LIST OF NEWSPAPERS.

No.	Names of Newspapers.	Place of publication.	Number of copies issued.	Dates of papers received and examined for the week.
BENGALI.				
<i>Monthly.</i>				
1	"Bhárat Shramjíbí"	Baráhanagar	4,000	Fálgun, 1284 B. S.
2	"Rajshahye Sambád"	Rajshahye	.....
3	"Grámbártá Prakáshiká"	Comercolly	200	
4	"Arya Pratibhá"	Bhowanipore	.....
5	"Suhrid"	Calcutta	.....
<i>Bi-monthly.</i>				
6	"Culna Prakásh"	Culna	.....
7	"Hindu Lalana"	Nawabgunge, Barrack-pore.	.....
8	"Sahayogí"	Bhowanipore, Calcutta	.....	30th March 1878.
<i>Weekly.</i>				
9	"Banga Hitaishi"	Bhowanipore	.....
10	"Bishwa Dút"	Táligunj, Calcutta	.....	3rd April 1878.
11	"Bhárat Mihir"	Mymensingh	658	4th ditto.
12	"Bhárat Sangskáriká"	Calcutta	.....	1st ditto.
13	"Bengal Advertiser"	Ditto	.....
14	"Dacca Prakásh"	Dacca	400	31st March 1878.
15	"Education Gazette"	Hooghly	1,168	
16	"Moorshedabad Pratinidhi"	Berhampore	.....
17	"Pratikár"	Ditto	235	29th ditto.
18	"Grámbártá Prakáshiká"	Comercolly	200	
19	"Sambád Bháskar"	Calcutta	.....
20	"Sulabha Samáchár"	Ditto	5,500	6th April 1878.
21	"Sádháraní"	Chinsurah	516	31st March 1878.
22	"Hindu Hitaishiní"	Dacca	300	
23	"Soma Prakásh"	Bhowanipore	700	8th April 1878.
24	"Sahachar"	Calcutta	.....	1st ditto.
25	"Hindu Ranjiká"	Bauleah, Rajshahye	.....	3rd and 10th April 1878.
26	"Rungpore Dik Prakásh"	Kákiná, Rungpore	250	14th March 1878.
27	"Burdwan Pracháriká"	Burdwan	165	
<i>Bi-weekly.</i>				
28	"Banga Mittra"	Calcutta	4,000	
<i>Daily.</i>				
29	"Sambád Prabhákar"	Ditto	550	3rd to 9th April 1878.
30	"Sambád Púrnachandrodaya"	Ditto	.....	5th to 11th ditto.
31	"Samáchár Chandriká"	Ditto	625	6th to 11th ditto.
32	"Banga Vidyá Prakáshiká"	Ditto	.....	8th to 10th ditto.
33	"Arya Mihir"	Ditto	.....
ENGLISH AND BENGALI.				
<i>Weekly.</i>				
34	"Howrah Hitakari"	Bethar, Howrah	300	7th April 1878.
35	"Moorshedabad Patriká"	Berhampore	.....	5th ditto.
36	"Burrusal Bártábaha"	Burrusal	300	
ENGLISH AND URDU.				
37	"Urdu Guide"	Calcutta	400	6th ditto.
URDU.				
38	"Akhbár-ul-Akhiár"	Mozufferpore	.....
HINDI.				
<i>Weekly.</i>				
39	"Behár Bandhu"	Bankipore, Patna	509	10th ditto.
PERSIAN.				
40	"Jám-Jahán-numá"	Calcutta	250	5th and 12th April 1878.

POLITICAL.

SAHACHAR,
April 1st, 1878.

WE take the following from an article headed, the "War" in the *Sahachar*, of the 1st April:—Ever since the commencement of the war between Russia

England and the war.

and Turkey, only two persons in England appear to have known with any definiteness the course to be pursued. These are, first, our most esteemed Sovereign; and secondly, the Prime Minister Lord Beaconsfield. Both had from the first predicted that England's interests would be attacked. But Mr. Gladstone created such an agitation, and produced such an effect upon the minds of the people, that the Sovereign and the Premier were not able to effect any movement. Lords Derby and Salisbury have ever shown a fear of war; and their obstinacy led to a division in the Cabinet. For all these reasons, there has been no stability in the policy of England for the last few months. The English people have at length come to recognize their duty; and seen that their country, which had overthrown Napoleon after a twenty years' war, had now, through the faults of the Manchester School of Politicians, become the laughing-stock of all Europe. Even the eyes of Mr. Gladstone have been at last opened. It is now clearly proved that the Russian Government has deceived England; and all doubts have been dispelled regarding its hostile intentions. Fortunately, Lord Beaconsfield has quietly made all his preparations. There will be a fearful war. England, it is probable, will have to fight alone with Russia, Austria, and Germany, which are all leagued together against her. But she has no lack of troops, if only they can be brought together, to fight the combined powers. Turkey will soon recover her prestige, if two successive defeats can be inflicted upon Russia. It is needless to say that such a war is exceedingly welcome to the natives of India. It was only because England had so long remained neutral that the vernacular papers had made sneering remarks. However that may be, Russia should not be allowed to become further aggressive.

It appears from her attitude that she really desires war. Her recent successes have evidently led her to imagine that she is able to humiliate even England. What an error! At other times, indeed, we may not agree among ourselves and may differ from the Government; but now that the critical time has come, we are all unanimous. Let Her Majesty be assured of this. Not hundreds, not thousands, not tens of thousands, but hundreds of thousands of warriors are ready to go from India to fight her battles. Whatever her subjects may say on other occasions, when once the war has commenced, there is only one opinion among them, and that is—we must strike Russia. The Mahratta horsemen will ride about in the streets of Moscow. Does Russia want to rule in India? Not certainly so long as there is blood in our veins. Let the Empress of India fearlessly enter upon war. We are ready to bear any amount of hardship for our gracious Sovereign, who is the veritable Sítá of these days. Shall England, which overthrew Napoleon, fear Gortschakoff and Bismarck? Who will bear this? Our countrymen! Be of one mind. Brethren of the Mahomedan faith! This is the time. Russia is your worst enemy. You have all seen the Prince of Wales. Who is there that would not lay down his life for him. It is his Royal Mother who summons us; and we are ready to risk all for this mother of India. Our only word is that Russia must be vanquished.

BISHWA DUT,
April 3rd, 1878.

2. The *Bishwa Dút*, of the 3rd April, contains an editorial headed,

England and the war.

"How is England to blame?" According

to the writer, the unpopularity of England, at the present moment, with the Continental Powers, is due not to any fault on her part, but rather to the existence of jealousy in their minds, occasioned by

the spectacle of her honor, wealth, and greatness. As individuals may be envious, so also may nations. England cannot in justice be blamed for the attitude she has maintained during this war towards her ally Turkey. As a true friend she remonstrated with her on account of her faults; and only kept herself aloof from the struggle, when she found, that Turkey would not listen to her counsels. The war, however, has at length come to this pass, that Russia, backed by Germany, is determined to ruin the Turkish Empire. All moral considerations have now in Europe given place to the goddess of selfishness; and there is nothing which the nations of Europe will not do to gratify her. What wonder then that, under these circumstances, there should be no peace in Europe?

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION.

3. We cull the following observations from an article in the *Rungpore Dik Prakash*, of the 14th March, headed, the
The Vernacular Press Act.

RUNGPORE DIX
PRAKASH,
March 14th, 1878.

“Vernacular Press Act” :—The feelings of contempt, disfavour, and anger, with which native newspapers had long been regarded by Government, have at last produced bitter fruit; and the stringent measure recently passed, will inflict a serious blow on their progress. Those who believe that native newspapers are capable of benefiting the people of this province in numberless ways, and that their extensive circulation is calculated to further the advancement not only of Bengal, but of the whole of India, will probably be pained to learn the contents of this new Act. Almost everybody would recognize the beneficial character of the services rendered by the Native Press, except the Government, which, instead of doing so, cherishes directly opposite feelings regarding them. In order to punish the alleged seditious writings of Native Editors, a special law has been passed, which is not applicable to papers published in the English language. The Bengalis are a weak race, and the language, too, is wanting in vigor; their representatives in the Press have consequently been reproved, insulted, and intimidated by the enactment of this law. Any amount of beating may be inflicted, if only the victim is bound hand and foot; and it is not certainly difficult to punish the Bengalis, who are fast bound in the chains of subjection. The slightest frown will stop their mouths and make them crouch with fear. The exercise of justice, however, and not force, would have been commendable in their case. It behoved the authorities to consider whether it would be just to gag the mouths of Native Editors by law and deprive them of their independence. Is it not, besides, a matter of glory to the British Government, that under it newspapers first made their appearance in this country, and have materially contributed to the growth and formation of the vernacular languages, especially the Bengali. We fail to see what evil has resulted from the liberty and encouragement hitherto extended to us. On the other hand, we fully admit, although the rulers may not, that its remonstrances and protests have, in a considerable measure, secured regularity in the work of administration, reformation of political and social abuses, and have warned public officers against wrong. Nay, it would be no exaggeration to say that, to the extensive circulation of native newspapers alone is due the rare occurrence of cases of injustice. It is a great error, on the part of the rulers, to suppose that the unrestricted license of the Native Press may lead to sedition. As a matter of fact, the natives of this country are intensely attached and loyal to the British Government. They have a strong faith in its good, liberal, and beneficent intentions; and it is this which has emboldened them to write so freely as they have done. They would not certainly have acted thus under the rule of Seraj-ud-dowlah. Even if there be sedition, the provisions of the Penal Code are sufficient to

repress it. It is exceedingly to be regretted that Government should have passed such a stringent measure without soliciting the opinions of the public.

PRATIKAR,
March 29th, 1878.

4. The *Pratikár*, of the 29th March, makes the following remarks in reference to the transfer to Chupra of

Mr. Hodgkinson.

Mr. Hodgkinson, the Magistrate and Collector

of Moorshedabad : Mr. Hodgkinson came here only in March last ; but he has, within one year, made himself well acquainted with the condition of the people in this district, whose advancement he had always at heart. Of a courteous and social disposition, he had acquired a thorough knowledge of zemindari affairs. We regret that his order of transfer has come so unexpectedly.

SAHAYOGI,
March 30th, 1878.

5. The *Sahayogi* is a new weekly published at Bhowanipore. We have the third number before us, containing a long article on the Vernacular Press Act. The sentiments are the same as those noticed in paragraph 1. The writer further quotes with approbation the observations made in a recent issue of the *Statesman* on the subject.

DACCA PRAKASH,
March 31st, 1878.

6. The *Dacca Prakásh*, of the 31st March, writes the following : No Delay in paying the instalments of one, who has not any personal experience, can land revenue at the public treasuries. at all realize the amount of trouble and inconvenience occasioned to the public, in the matter of paying their instalments of the land revenue at the public treasuries. This cannot generally be done at the proper time, even after the different officers employed under the different establishments have been bribed and patiently waited upon. The difficulty owes its origin, not merely to the greed of gain on the part of the amlah, though many of them are indeed free from this vice, but also in a great measure to the excess of work which has been thrown upon them, and which makes it almost impossible for them punctually to attend to this part of their duties.

It, therefore, behoves the superior Revenue authorities to make arrangements for having the work performed expeditiously. For this purpose, it would be well if the several payments on account of the Land Revenue, Road Cess and Public Works Cess, to be made by one person, could all be entered in one chálán, from which afterwards they might be credited in different books under their respective heads. Both the public and Government will be gainers by such an arrangement.

SADHARANI,
March 31st, 1878.

7. The *Sádháraní*, of the 31st March, devotes no less than five articles to the discussion of the Vernacular Press Act.

The Vernacular Press Act.

The first is headed "Fire again or a red cloud?"

and is as follows : Wherever we go, the question is asked—What will you do now ? The unexpected manifestation of the wrath of Government upon the native newspapers has startled and terrified everybody. Even those who, intoxicated with the pleasures of wealth, never troubled their heads with such topics as the weal or woe of the country, the progress or decline of language, have been startled. The respectable, though poor, native gentleman, who, owing to the difficulties of earning a livelihood, never hitherto discussed any political measures, nor had the leisure to do so, even he, with wonder and wide-opened eyes, casts his looks on all sides, as though some new difficulty had arisen, which interfered with the means of his subsistence ; the enterprising young men who go about the country holding meetings, and make a just use of their powers of eloquence by rousing the dormant energies of the people for the purpose of promoting unity, thoughtfulness, and habits of business, now tremble with fear to think that, since the liberty of writing has gone, it might not be strange if the liberty of speech also were at any moment taken away.

The reasons, which have led Government to bind the Native Press hand and foot, may be equally cited to justify a proposal, to the effect that a Government officer, especially appointed for the purpose, should be informed in writing, beforehand, of the intentions of a speaker who would address an assembly of more than ten persons. Such a law would not be altogether unlikely. As a burnt cow, which dreads even clouds gilded with the rays of the setting sun, so dangers we see on every side, and are not able to judge whether they are real or imaginary. We are afraid that Government will soon pass a law for the prevention of speech-making by natives at a meeting or before an assembly. Twice in the pages of the *Calcutta Gazette*, on the occasion of reviewing the Municipal Administration Report of Calcutta, were Native Commissioners reproved for displaying their oratorical powers and doing little work. Again, in the course of his address to the boys of the Oriental Seminary, the Lieutenant-Governor made reference to certain native gentlemen who were going about the country raising political agitations. Such pungent remarks, on the part of the rulers, do not certainly augur well for us. A straw shows the direction of the wind.

The saying is, as a god is, so are his accompaniments, and such is the animal that carries him. Thus we have the mendicant Siva carried by his bullock; the god of beauty by his peacock; he of deformity by a rat; and the goddess of power by a lion. No sooner has the paternal Government, through error, come to regard us as untrustworthy, than its supporters and admirers in the Anglo-Indian Press are adducing proofs to confirm this error. Thus a correspondent, writing to a daily, gives an account of how, in a place near Buxar, a Mahomedan was recently addressing a large concourse of people regarding the hardships suffered under the British Government, and the hope of a change for the better within a short time. Now, it is quite possible that the writer did not understand the true meaning of the speaker; or it may be equally likely that, an illiterate Mahomedan was actually preaching sedition under the idea that this would make him greatly admired. But whether the account given be true or not, the mere fact of such things being written in the newspapers confirms us in the belief that Government will gradually curtail the liberty of speech. After all, it is not a yellow cloud, it is a veritable fire, that has broken out.

8. The second article is headed, the "Existing laws, such as the Penal Code, &c., were sufficient":—It may be asked,

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if the present law (the Native Press Act)

is not required, is it desirable that writings hostile to Government should continue to be published unchecked? We answer—no. We fully understand the distinction between liberty and license; and know that all liberty must have a limit, and consequently that the liberty of speech and writing extends only to a certain point. The freedom we had hitherto enjoyed under the British Government was also within proper bounds. We should be guilty if ever we transgressed them. The four boundaries of our liberty are (1) the Penal Code; (2) the few sections of the Act amending the Penal Code; (3) the powers vested in Government under the Dramatic Performances Act; and (4) the general orders of the Government officers. It would be enough if we were only allowed to act unfettered within these boundaries. If this alone were permitted us, the rulers would not only find an occasion for the exercise of their liberality, but would also greatly promote the work of good government, and to a considerable extent make the people contented, by giving them an opportunity of expressing their discontent. But Government, it seems, is determined not to give them this liberty; and has reserved to itself the power to declare, without any trial or investigation, whether a particular paper has by its writings exceeded the prescribed limits.

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This has greatly frightened the people, who believe that the powerful and wealthy British Government can well afford to be indifferent to the strong language of the Native Editors. We, therefore, hope that the rulers will only listen to our complaints, and not take any notice of the strong language in which they may occasionally be embodied. Of what use are their boundless power, their railways, telegraphs, and invincible police, and rigorous administration, if they do not give the authorities power to overlook the weak writings of the vernacular papers.

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9. But prudence dictates that the hostility of the native prints, however contemptible, should not be overlooked. Morality, indeed, teaches us to love our enemies; but not statesmanship, according to which even the smallest foe ought to be destroyed. It is on considerations of this nature that Government has passed the Vernacular Press Act. But before crediting the rulers with great intelligence and political sagacity, we should like to know whether (1) certain native papers are really seditious, and (2) if they have commenced writing sedition, will the present Act be sufficient to check it. As to the first, we confess our inability to give a satisfactory answer. With the exception of the few papers published in Bengal, we have but little acquaintance with those of the other provinces of India. Government, indeed, has told us that some of them contain unmitigated sedition; but we cannot without some hesitation credit this statement, for Government depends for its information on the translations made of the newspapers by its officers; and these are, we know, eminently untrustworthy. There are, again, other weighty reasons for not regarding the vernacular prints as seditious. No one, except a confirmed lunatic, would desire the discontinuance of British rule in India. Even if we admit that the present Government has some serious defects, and that, there being little or no probability of the removal of such failings within a short time, the expulsion of the English from this country becomes desirable; and if we suppose that Russia is invited to invade the empire, and that she becomes victorious, still we cannot believe that the conquerors will govern the country better, or even as well as the English. Russia is a hungry bear, and India will be ruined before her hunger is appeased; and should a Russian Disraeli show his determination to inflict a serious injury on the people, there would be no Russian Fawcett or Russian Bright to speak on their behalf. Hence the idea of expelling the British from India through the aid of the Russians is as idle and unreasonable as that of building a castle in the air. Native newspapers have no connection with such insane projects.

SADHARANI.

10. Nor will the present measure (the Vernacular Press Act) be found adequate to repress sedition, if it really exists.

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We believe there does not exist any person in this country, who would publish a newspaper with a view to subvert British rule in India; and if there were, it has not been wise to pass this law to punish their treason. Treason, did it really exist, would work secretly, like the anguish of the Bengali widow, and not make its appearance in newspapers. Although the case was slightly different at the commencement of the French Revolution, the general rule is, as we have indicated. It is not easy to meet with success by publicly conspiring against the Government; and what wonder, therefore, that the disaffected should, in all ages, have been found to conspire in secret. The secret conspiracy of the seditious, and the newspaper which may be published by them, are two different things; and why should, therefore, a thunderbolt impending upon the one, serve as a check on the other? If there be really sedition in India, henceforth it is likely to increase. The disaffected may now think

that since Government fears them so much, a little caution only will ensure success. Again, if it be the object of a certain section of the people to extinguish all loyalty to the British Government, they may in one day publish ten thousand papers preaching sedition. The procedure laid down in the Act will prove too slow and inadequate to resist the consequences. For all these reasons, we respectfully ask Government to re-consider the subject, and believe that, on second thoughts, the rulers will see the wisdom of not enforcing the present law. It is a pregnant saying that confidence begets confidence and respect.

11. In an article communicated to this paper, and headed the "Laments of Bengali females," the writer

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dwells on the injury that will accrue to the

cause of female education from the enforcing of the Vernacular Press Act. Through fear, native females will henceforth cease to write in the newspapers. The progress of female education and the Bengali language will both seriously suffer. It is exceedingly to be regretted that such a stringent Act—one especially which will retard the progress of native females—should have been passed under a Sovereign who is herself a female, and Lady Lytton who takes such a maternal interest in their welfare.

12. The *Bhárat Sangskárik*, of the 1st April, gives a translation of the speech made by Sir Charles Metcalfe at

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the "Free Press" dinner, in which he dwelt on

the benefits of the liberty of the Press. Lord Macaulay rendered material aid in passing the Act of freedom. The writer adds that it is a matter of extreme regret that Lord Lytton, after the noble views he expressed on this subject in his poems, and in his address last year to the Native Editors at the Delhi Assemblage, should have agreed with his colleagues in depriving the native newspapers of their liberty. But we can never believe that England, which is foremost in civilization, and which has sacrificed so much for freedom, will suffer us to be long kept in bondage.

13. The same paper protests strongly against an article which appeared

The *Englishman* on education.

in the *Englishman* of the 27th March last, in

which the Editor ascribed the disloyalty of

the Native Press to the spread of education, and asks Government to abolish the Education Department. The *Sangskárik* dwells on the beneficial consequences of education, and the unquestioned loyalty of educated natives to British rule. He is happy to think that the paternal British Government differs in opinion from the *Englishman*, and will not, he believes, listen to its narrow-minded advice. It is because the people have firm confidence in the equity and generosity of the rulers that they so freely give expression to their views and sentiments. The Anglo-Indian Editors, therefore, should not, by their writings, make Government an object of terror and disrespect to the people, or lead the rulers to distrust them.

14. The *Sahachar*, of the 1st April, makes the following observations

Mr. Eden.

in an article on "Mr. Eden":—The public

have come to believe that the stringent

measure recently passed for the better control of the Native Press is in a large measure due to the present Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal. For this reason, many have become offended with him; nor are they wholly unjustified. We, nevertheless, exhort our fellow countrymen that for one error, they should not forget the noble acts of a whole lifetime performed by our old and tried friend. Mr. Eden is a true friend of the people of Bengal. That we may make progress in every direction, and that we may be happy and prosperous, is sincerely desired by His Honor, who has all along sedulously laboured for this end. Examine all his acts, and you will find that all of

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them bear evidence of this desire. To part with such a friend altogether is both wrong, and opposed to all sound advice. No one will be able to say that in passing the new Act, Mr. Eden was instigated by any malicious motives. It is because his conviction, sense of duty, and discernment, told him that a law was necessary, that he helped with his counsel to have it enacted. This was, indeed, an error; but not a dishonest error. The people of course might expect that a person, who knows Bengal so well as Mr. Eden, would not possibly have any doubts regarding their loyalty; and they are also justified in saying that he should have stood up on their behalf. When Lord Mayo and Sir John Strachey attacked the system of high education in Bengal, our true friend Sir William Grey then manfully stood up and fought for the good of the country. The public rallied round him and lent him their support; and the Government of India was thus vanquished in the struggle. And it is because Mr. Eden has not played a similar part in connection with the Vernacular Press Act, that the people have been sorely disappointed. It would not have surprised them so much if the Act had been that of Sir George Campbell. But they can, and naturally do, ask if it is their own Mr. Eden who has done this; and whether it can be that he has forsaken them at last. One party, however, says that he never was our friend; and whenever these parties meet in public or private, various remarks are made regarding this action of the Lieutenant-Governor. Now we tell them this is wrong, and that Mr. Eden is our true friend. We, too, are guilty to some extent; and shall we for one fault, forget a long-standing friendship?

SAMACHAR,
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15. The same paper remarks that, owing to the excessive charges on Translation fees in the High Court. account of translations for which suitors are made liable, it has become in a manner impossible to make appeals to the High Court. As the people have an unbounded confidence in the equity and impartiality of the decisions of this tribunal, it certainly does not behove the authorities to place obstacles in the way of litigants. Translations of documents being required only for the benefit of the Barrister Judges, who are not acquainted with the vernaculars, their expenses should be borne by the State, which has engaged such Judges. At any rate, the charges should be reduced.

BISHWA DUT.
April 3rd, 1878.

16. The *Bishwa Düt*, of the 3rd April, writes a long article on the Vernacular Press Act. The writer regrets that

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this stringent measure has been passed at one

sitting of the Legislative Council, and in an unusual way, in this time of profound peace, without there being any necessity for it. It will retard the progress of the vernacular languages and repress all freedom of speech. The Act has been passed on the strength of a few translated extracts from the native papers. This is unjust. The translations, when the weekly reports used to be published, were constantly found to be inaccurate. We know it as a fact that the Native Press has contained more articles on the British Government of an eulogistic than of a hostile character. Of course there are exceptions; and as far as these are concerned, the sooner they disappear the better. For their punishment, the existing laws, such as the Penal Code, were sufficient. It is manifestly unjust to punish the whole class of Native Editors for the faults of a few. The native papers are an eye-sore to the Police Officers, Magistrates, and other authorities in the mofussil, for the exposure made therein of their vagaries. It is therefore exceedingly hard that they should now be provided with an opportunity of exercising their power over Native Editors. Far better that this paper should cease to exist, than that its articles should be written to gratify the caprice or avert the wrath of Magistrates.

17. The same paper, in another article headed, "Government should consult the opinion of the people," observes Government should consult public opinion. with regret that an erroneous impression seems to prevail among the rulers, from the lowest

European officer to the highest, that the native papers do not represent the views of the people, and that they persistently show a gratuitous hostility towards the British Government. Even such an able Governor as Mr. Eden has not been free from this error. "But it behoves the authorities to consider what motive we can possibly have for knowingly opposing the beneficent acts of Government. The latter is not infallible; and it is only when we find that its acts are likely to be productive of injurious rather than beneficial consequences, that we protest. Thus we protested against the introduction of any fresh tax at this time, when the recurrence of famines has greatly added to the hardships of the people, and preferred an income tax as the worse evil of the two. Government, however, ignored our representations, and imposed the License Tax. But events in Surat and other places of the Bombay Presidency now afford abundant evidence as to the justice or otherwise of our remarks. The people there refuse to pay the tax, not through any evil motive, but from sheer inability."

18. The *Bhárat Mihir*, of the 4th April, writes as follows in reference to the Vernacular Press Act, and the

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loyalty of the natives of this country: We

shall not, in the present article, speak of any other province of India, nor have we the power to do so; but shall briefly advert to the feelings with which Government is regarded by the people of Bengal. They possess a more thorough acquaintance with, and are better known to, Government than any other race. Their interests are wholly bound up in the continuance of British rule in India. It is probably for these reasons that the Bengalis are more loyal to the present Government than any other people; and it is perhaps owing to their more intense loyalty, that they point out the errors and shortcomings of the rulers, and dwell upon the grievances of the country with more freedom than others. They had no idea that Government would ever question their loyalty. Lord Lytton's Government has now warned us of this; and we hear, for the first time, that we are not to be trusted, because we are a subject people; and that the narrow statesmanship of the present Government has not learned to place confidence in an alien nation. Acting on the evil counsel of the Hon'ble Mr. Eden and a few other equally self-opinionated persons, Lord Lytton has perhaps forgotten the obvious truth that a free and unreserved discussion of the merits of governmental measures does not necessarily clash with a genuine feeling of loyalty. The people of India despise that superficial loyalty, whose existence would be jeopardized by the use of a few strong words. Ours is calmer and more profound; it ever remains intact and silent. Government, it seems, would like to find in our loyalty an overflowing stream of eulogium, that the people might, therefrom, infer that the present rulers are spotless, pure, and of unruffled tempers. It is really a misfortune that such views are entertained.

Native papers chiefly concern themselves with the following four topics, with not one of which is the existence of loyalty incompatible. These are (1) reduction of public expenditure; (2) appointment of natives to high offices under the State; (3) defects in the administration of justice in the mofussil; and (4) the existence of feelings of distinction between the conquerors and the conquered. Now to the first. That India is a very poor country, and is therefore unable to bear the expenses of such a costly administration, is universally admitted. Although Government

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BHARAT MÍHIR,
April 4th, 1878.

does not expressly in words acknowledge this, still its every act and proposal prove it. Government admits that there are excessive charges incurred on account of the Army and Public Works ; but that, so far as the former of these is concerned, it has no hand in the matter. But there is no reason why the people of India should believe this to be the case. They cannot, as a matter of fact, understand the difference between the Home Government and the Government of India ; and so ignorant are they in this respect, that they usually identify every Magistrate, and oftentimes every European, with the Government. There is also an excess of expenditure in other departments besides the two mentioned above. By making retrenchments in certain matters, the rulers are, in a manner, bearing testimony to the truth of our remarks. There are, however, certain other subjects, equally protested against by us, such as the high salaries paid to the Services, the Cooper's Hill College, entertaining an unnecessary number of European officers, &c., regarding which, while admitting the need of economy, Government, nevertheless, fails to adopt any practical measures. Any reference to the second point intensely pains us. Lord Lytton is attempting a solution of the difficulty, while suspecting the loyalty of the natives. On the occasion of unveiling the statue of Lord Canning, he clearly gave us to understand that, in making the appointment of natives to high offices under the State, the supremacy of the British administration must have the foremost consideration. For twenty years on end, we have been told that natives have a right to be appointed to the superior offices under the Government of this country ; and that the rulers are willing to confer the privilege upon them. We have heard many pledges given, which have raised our hopes ; but nothing has followed in practice. Who is there, that will not feel the keenest disappointment at this ? What other nation would more patiently bear to see the children of the soil, brought up in the country, and living under the British Government, thus kept out of all the superior administrative offices ? We have occasionally given vent to our feelings on this subject in newspapers ; Lord Lytton's Government has construed this ebullition of our feelings into sedition.

We should be wanting in our duty as a journalist, did we not express in our paper the feelings of the people on the third point, namely, the defects in the administration of justice in the mofussil. We can never conceal the fact that the Bengali community is really dissatisfied with the manner in which many Magistrates administer justice. The publication, one after the other, of the tales of wrong committed by Magistrates has lessened the respect and confidence with which their decisions had so long been received, till the ignorant and the semi-educated have come to believe that impartial justice can never be expected, whenever the dispute is between a European and Native. Government certainly never means to do injustice ; yet it cannot deny there are many instances in which miscarriage of justice occurs. Lord Lytton's Fuller Minute, and the order of Mr. Eden to make a fresh enquiry into the Lokenathpore murder case, furnish unmistakeable proofs of this. Who is then responsible for this miscarriage of justice ? The blind advisers of Government might ask if there is any administration in the world under which the Judges are free from error. We reply that Government cannot advance such a plea. For, in the first place, their ideal is a lofty one ; and secondly, they rule over a subject people, who in all ages naturally regard the actions of their rulers with a measure of doubt, so that the slightest injustice produces a tenfold amount of suspicion in the mind. But all Magistrates are not of the same kind. Most of them labour day and night, at the expense of their health, to administer justice. It is the faults of a few, which, like an epidemic, poison the minds of the people. It would

have been discreet in Government, if, before proceeding to gag the mouths of the Native Editors, it had first stopped the springs of the oppressions and injustice complained of in the mofussil. As it is, the Vernacular Press Act will increase the suspicious feelings of the people, and consequently lessen their esteem for the Government. They may not speak out their minds; but no law will be able to regulate their feelings. The fourth subject, which is discussed in the Native Press, is that of the relations between the conquerors and the conquered. Here we state with regret an universal truth, that half the discontent which now prevails in the country would have disappeared, if only the Europeans had learnt to treat natives with kindness. There exists at present an ocean of difference between the parties; and so long as this breach continues, it is impossible that any good feelings should spring up between them. Already there were many causes of discontent, which will now be increased by this fresh proof on the part of Government, of the distrust with which the people are regarded. All differences would have disappeared in time if, by overlooking our errors and shortcomings, Government had sought to promote good feelings between the two races. By passing this measure, not only has Lord Lytton injured the natives of India, but, by expressly distrusting them, he has injured Government also.

19. The same paper assures his contributors and correspondents that they need have no fear from the Vernacular Press Act on account of the *Bhárat Mihir*.

The Vernacular Press Act. It has nothing to fear so long as it keeps within the bounds of loyalty; nor will the progress of the vernaculars be retarded by the introduction of this Act; for nothing can now do this. Again, the fears entertained by many, that native papers will henceforth write only in praise of Government, are groundless. All the penalties laid down in the Act will not be able to check the progress of natives.

20. The *Moorshedabad Patriká*, of the 5th April, contains an article headed, the "Misfortunes of India." The writer complains that Government has deprived

Misfortunes of India. the people of the liberty of writing freely—a privilege which enabled them to make known to the rulers their wants and grievances. Henceforth, Government will not be made acquainted with the condition of the people. At the present time, this measure will prove a serious embarrassment to the masses. A few only of the peasantry are well-to-do; and the frequent recurrence of famines, failure of crops, the prevalence of high prices and taxation have greatly aggravated their miseries. Still they will not be impatient, nor become lawless, as the inhabitants of Surat and some other parts of the Bombay Presidency are said to be, owing to the enforcement of the License Tax Act. A respectful and loyal protest against the measure was all that should have been done. The adoption of violent measures will only ruin their cause.

21. Feeling there is no hope of obtaining a repeal of the Vernacular Press Act by going to Parliament or the *The Vernacular Press Act.* Secretary of State, the same paper exhorts his

contemporaries of the Native Press, whether they be right or wrong, guilty or innocent, respectfully to approach the Viceroy and ask for a re-consideration of the measure.

22. The *Sulabha Samáchár*, of the 6th April, asks Government not to *The Vernacular Press Act.* be in a hurry to enforce the Vernacular Press

Act; and hopes that the seditious writings will be prevented by the mere existence of this fearful law. To enforce it would be much like firing a cannon to kill a fly. Now that Lord Lytton is enjoying the cool weather of the Simla Hills, it is hoped that the matter will be re-considered.

BHÁRAT MIHIR,
April 4th, 1878.

MOORSHEDABAD PATRIKA,
April 5th, 1878.

MOORSHEDABAD PATRIKA.

SULABHA SAMACHAR,
April 6th, 1878.

SULABHA SAMACHAR,
April 6th, 1878.

23. The same paper writes sneeringly of the *Englishman's* advice to Government to abolish the Education Department, which is supposed to be responsible for the prevalence of seditious writing in the Native Press. But will loyalty be promoted by the prevalence of ignorance?

SULABHA SAMACHAR.

24. The same paper wants clear information as to what subjects may or may not be discussed in a native paper with reference to the Vernacular Press Act, which is not clear on this point. We shall be greatly obliged to the rulers, if explanations are given of the words "sedition" and "race-antagonism," and their extent, with a few illustrations. We are never in our writings actuated by any base motives; but we ask for this simply because our language might be misconstrued. What shall we do, if the English do any wrong? Shall we approve of their act? Where, again, is he to be found to whom the proofs must be submitted for examination? What shall be done if the proofs are not returned in time for publication? We hope this officer will be a competent person and well versed in the vernacular. The Act as it stands has quite puzzled us.

SULABHA SAMACHAR.

25. The same paper considers it ungenerous on the part of the rulers, thus to betake themselves to the coolness of the Hills, after kindling such a fire on the heads of Native Editors. It does not behove them thus to beat the weak. Government has become exceedingly unpopular for passing this Act. What will foreign powers think of it? Will they not regard it as a means of suppressing existing sedition? The measure will thus produce results quite opposed to facts. A loyal people will be regarded by the world as seditious.

SOMA PRAKASH,
April 8th, 1878.

26. The *Soma Prakash*, of the 8th April, contains an article headed "The Vernacular Press." The writer makes nine extracts from the back numbers of the paper, all in praise of the British Government and the British nation, and breathing a spirit of fervent loyalty towards it. The selected passages are introduced with the following remarks:—Who was it that said that Native Editors are seditious and hostile to the British Government? The rulers, it seems, have proved this by merely quoting a few passages from the columns of vernacular journals, on the strength of which an Act also has been passed. We shall similarly extract passages from the *Soma Prakash* to refute these charges. What will Government do now? Will it now take us to be loyal and disloyal by halves? If that be the case, the Act also ought to be broken into two parts; and while adjudging punishment upon half our body, the other half should be rewarded. Are we to be regarded as disloyal, merely because we protest against the wrongs committed by Government? Shall we be regarded as hostile to the British nation, because we dwell on the faults of offending Europeans? Jim, on a slight provocation, picks up a quarrel, and kills a native with one blow of his fist; Joseph, in broad daylight, plunders the house of a citizen. Are we to be looked upon as the enemies of the British nation for bringing these to the notice of Government, which was before ignorant of them? The merchants of Manchester are trying, in these hard times, to obtain a repeal of the Indian import duties; now, suppose we characterize this as a selfish proceeding on their part, is this hostility to the British? We have never said anything stronger.

SOMA PRAKASH.

27. The same paper writes with great force against the *Englishman*, which, in a recent article, advises Government to abolish the Education Department, and regards the language used as exceedingly ominous. He it was, who first urged on the rulers the necessity of such a law as the Vernacular Press Act. Fortunately, he is not the constituted adviser of Government. It did not,

however, behove such an experienced publicist to write things which are likely to cause sore disappointment to the natives of India and make them dissatisfied with their rulers. For what native of India will not be disappointed and vexed to hear that the way of learning will now be closed to his countrymen? What will they not have been deprived of, if deprived of the benefits of education? After that, for what good will the people remain attached to the British nation? Does the *Englishman* regard the discontinuance of education by force as the best way to keep the people in subjection? Tarquinus Superbus and other kings of ancient times sought to keep all in subjection by force; but did they succeed? Not to speak of others, even a son cannot be kept under the control of his father by force. The only way to obtain the attachment of the people is by acceding to their will. Will the abolition of education be gratifying to them? We did not even in our dreams suppose that we should hear such sentiments expressed by an Englishman. We respectfully beseech the Editor not to tender such good (?) counsel to the rulers.

LOCAL.

28. The *Pratikár*, of the 29th March, notices the high price of food-grains in Moorshedabad. There is in consequence considerable distress among the middle and the lower classes of the inhabitants.

PRATIKAR,
March 29th, 1878.

High prices and distress in Moorshedabad.

The writer asks the local public to open a shop in that place for the purpose of selling grain at a moderate rate of profit.

29. In a letter to the *Sahachar*, of the 1st April, purporting to have been written by the inhabitants of Chetua, in

SAHACHAR,
April 1st, 1878.

A canal in Chetua pergunnah.

the district of Midnapore, the writers direct the attention of Government to the serious inconvenience and loss which are likely to be occasioned by the excavation of a canal across the heart of the Chetua pergunnah. The scheme is intended for the improvement and protection from floods of the small pergunnah of Nárájol, the estate of the Maharajah of Burdwan, and has been determined upon at a recent meeting held in Ghattal. Now, if the project be really carried out in the manner indicated by the Public Works officer in charge, the inhabitants will be subjected to a greater amount of hardship than was occasioned by either the cyclone or the malarious fever. The excavation of the canal will perpetuate their miseries. The pergunnah Chetua is surrounded on all sides by the rivers Shílabatí, Kansábatí, and Rúpnáráyán, and in the rainy season presents the spectacle of a small island. The occurrence of inundations also makes cultivation almost impossible. And if a wide canal, in the form of a chord line, were now excavated in the interior, there would be no end to the troubles of the inhabitants. Even, at the very outset, hundreds of tenants must be ejected from their holdings, and not a few holders of rent-free tenures reduced to great straits. While the canal is, on the one hand, so likely to be injurious to the inhabitants, it is not, on the other, clear what good will accrue to the Maharajah's estate therefrom. Even if the scheme really proved beneficial, it would neither be just nor politic to injure so many, only to benefit one person.

30. The *Moorshedabad Patriká*, of the 5th April, notices the prevalence of gambling by means of three cards in Moorshedabad. Many are ruined by this.

MOORSHEDABAD
PATRIKA,
April 5th, 1878.

Gambling in Moorshedabad. The gamblers further commit robberies on the highway. There have been recently two instances of assault and robbery committed by these men. So powerful for mischief have they become, that the injured are afraid to complain against them. Even the Editor writes this in great fear, lest,

if the authorities fail to take any notice of the matter, he should incur the displeasure of the offenders.

MISCELLANEOUS.

PRATIKAR,
March 29th, 1878.

31. In a letter communicated to the *Pratikár*, of the 29th March, the writer laments the misfortunes which have befallen the people. At the present time, three great evils have overtaken them. These are (1) a change in their material condition and mental disposition, their utter poverty, and the prevalence of high prices. There is now more money in the country ; but the food-supply has decreased. The character of the nation has also degenerated. The Bengalis are now found wanting in meekness, hospitality, and all those noble social qualities which in former times shone conspicuously among them ; (2) the appointment of Major-General R. Strachey (who is mistaken for Sir John Strachey) as President of the Famine Commission ; and (3) the change in the disposition of Mr. Eden. His Honor, who was a staunch friend of the poor during the indigo riots, has become angry with the Native Editors, and has also imposed a License Tax upon the people.

SAHACHAR,
April 1st, 1878.

32. The *Sahachar*, of the 1st April, has an article headed, the "Causes of Famine." The writer dwells on the almost complete denudation of the country, which has been brought about by the clearing of forest lands and trees for the purpose of cultivation at the present time ; and which has affected injuriously the amount of annual rainfall, and the rotation of the seasons. The observations are the same as those made in a recent number of the *Statesman*.

BENGALI TRANSLATOR'S OFFICE,
The 13th April 1878.

JOHN ROBINSON,
Government Bengali Translator.